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HumCore

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In her lecture “A Myth of Horses”, posted on January 11, 2021, Professor O’Toole argues indigenous people were not passive onlookers to Spanish conquest and in fact understood, accommodated, and appropriated the animal technologies of the Europeans (O’Toole). Professor O’Toole is an Associate Professor of History at the University of California, Irvine who examines the events of the Spanish Conquest from the indigenous perspective, arguing against the portrayal of indigenous people as simple, lacking religion, and living without order. Furthermore, Professor O’Toole, much like in Matthew Restall’s *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, offers evidence that proves these claims of Indian primitiveness untrue. In O’Toole’s lecture she shows Indian ingenuity by evidence of their appropriation of mastiffs and horses, discrediting Incan perception of Spanish authority as “gods” by evidence of Indians witnessing lack of unity in Spanish authority, and showing the overall ineffectiveness of their animals as technologies of conquest. Professor O’Toole describes how the Spanish success was more of a matter of timing and weaponry rather than Native American inferiority. Professor O’Toole focuses in her lecture on the Spanish use of animals and methods of conquest from the late 14th century until the 19th century. Although the three sources evaluated below focus more on European contact with the Americas as opposed to the Spanish Conquest, the scholars’ arguments can be connected to each other in their Native American perception and contributing factors in their success. Two of the three sources below provide an extension of Professor O’Toole’s challenge to the traditional Eurocentric perception of Native Americans, while the other source offers an opposing argument than what is presented in O’Toole’s lecture and suggests an alternative view on influencing factors in conquest.

O’Toole, Rachel. “A Myth of Horses.” Yuja 2.0, Canvas, 11 January 2021.

I. Restall, Matthew. *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, Oxford, 2003, pp. 100-7, 131-45.

- A. Author:** Matthew Restall is a Professor of Colonial Latin American History and an academic Historian with areas of specialization in Yucatan and Mexico, Guatemala and Belize, Maya history, the Spanish Conquest, and Africans in Spanish America.
1. As a Professor and Historian, Restall is likely to be motivated to retrace the origins of Europeans myths and correct the historiography that depicts Europeans as superior and Native Americans as desolate and passive.
- B. Thesis and Claims:** “Trace the development of this myth of native desolation... looking first at early colonial views of pre-Columbian native cultures, then at European perceptions of native reactions to invasion and colonization... argue that native cultures were neither barbarous nor idyllic, but as civilized and imperfect as European cultures of the time... Native cultures proved resilient and adaptive, and many natives, especially élites, found opportunity in the Conquest-era transition” (102)
1. “Myth of superiority through a discussion of two sets of five explanations of the Conquest. The first set consists of mythic explanations, those based on the misunderstandings or misconceptions presented in this book. The second set are my antimythic explanations for the Conquest”(132)
  2. “Europeans and their descendants believed and perpetuated a myth that indigenous people were less than fully human because they lacked the attributes of human cultures and communities” (103)
- C. Evidence**
1. Europeans and the Spanish tales of Native Americans as inferior (103), humble, lacking weapons, clothing, and culture (104) contributed to Native American appearing inferior and, “a blank slate upon which “civilization” can be easily inscribed” (103) - Source 3 shows the Native Americans were not inferior or passive
  2. “Europeans “invented” America” (105) - Source 2 “animals” as main agents
  3. Juan Gines de Sepilaveda comment (hardly deserved the name of human beings) and Denis Dideror (men and native juxtaposition) show how indigenous people were perceived.
  4. Conquest-as-miracle explanation (134) - Source 2 animal explanation
  5. 5 myth based explanations for the Conquest: God’s will (134), belief of Spaniers as gods (134), native culture inferiority and naivete (134), Spanish superiority in language, literacy and reading (137), Spanish weaponry (139).
  6. Carlos Fuentes 2 factors to defeat the Indian nation: myth and weaponry (139-40)
  7. Disease brought from the Old World had a great contribution to Native American defeat(140-1), native disunity (141-2), weaponry (guns, horses, war dogs, and tactical skills) (142)
    - a) “But the advantages they offered faded during the Conquest period, as unconquered natives acquired the same technology” (142)
    - b) “Nevertheless, it seems clear that guns, horses, and mastiffs were a minor factor” (142)
    - c) “Steel sword... alone was worth more than a horse, a gun, and a mastiff put together” (143)
  8. Trilogy of factors explain conquest (disease, native disunity, and Spanish steel) (143)
  9. Culture/circumstances of war - natives at home and spanish lives (144)
  10. European new foods parallel to Old World diseases (145) - Source 2 mentions disease

- D. Purpose:** These chapters show instances in history where these myths originated and work to show the shortcomings of each interpretation as well as offering alternate reasons as to why the Europeans succeeded. With Restall's background and occupation as a historian and a professor these chapters were most likely written in a sense of obligation to correct the myths held about indigenous people. Native American, European, and Spanish are the cultures being discussed in relation to their behavior in the New World during the late 15th century to mid 16th century. Restall gives a detailed account of Native American myths and different explanations for Conquest in an interpretation based on evidence.
- E. Evaluation:** This source focuses a lot on reexamining flaws in the Eurocentric perspective of Native American and European contact. These chapters mention ideas found in the other two sources but takes a different interpretation on animals than Source 2 and opens the conversation for Source 3. The author shows a thread of critical thinking by identifying the myth, providing evidence of its prevalence today and providing sufficient evidence and support to actively justify his arguments. The author's claim depends a lot on the evidence he provides because he uses the evidence to show the flaws in the myths.
- II. Crosby, Alfred. "Animals." *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe*, 900-1900, Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 171-94.
- A. Author:** Alfred Crosby is a scholar, American Historian, and Professor of History, Geography, and American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, Harvard university, and University of Helsinki.
- Crosby is approaching this topic with an interdisciplinary approach which may contribute to him seeking to understand the geographical presence and influence on the Conquest as opposed to Restall who is interested in correcting social wrongs. As a geographer Crosby has likely gained insight on how important location and resources affect those who live there as well as how it influences their development and adaptation to the area.
- B. Thesis and Claims:** Animals were the main driving force behind colonization. (172)
- "If the Europeans had arrived in the New World and Australasia with twentieth-century technology in hand, but no animals, they would not have made as great a change as they did by arriving with horses, cattle, pigs, goats, sheep, asses, chickens, cats, and so forth" (173)
- C. Evidence**
- Animals made the land of the New World adaptable for the Europeans (172)
  - Animal success = European success (172)
  - European advantage was domesticated animals (173) - counter to Source 1 (also disease, weapons, and native disunity)
  - Pigs significant as a supply of meat (175-6)
    - Difference in pig use compared to Source 3 - used to gain land and drive out Native Americans
  - Horses roam free without human constraint (182-3)
  - "Fences were not for keeping livestock penned in, but for keeping livestock out" (184) - connection to Source 3 in Native American adaptability to English livestock
  - Horse > gold impact (185) - connection to technology reference on page 173
  - Livestock did better in the New World than the Old World - one sided (187-193)

- a) 17th century animals and insects did better in New World than Europeans (188)
- 9. “To an extent, their advance was due to human intervention... but in most cases the avant-garde of these Old World insects moved west independently” (189)
  - a) Source 3 - connection to human intervention
- 10. English fly as symbol of European approach (189-190) - St. Jean de Crevecoeur
- 11. Immigrant rats to show humans were, “seldom masters of the biological changes they triggered in the Neo-Europes” (192)
  - a) Connection to Source 3 where the animals had to be directed - show opposing perspectives
- 12. “They benefited from the great majority of these changes, but benefit or not, their role often was less a matter of judgment and choice than of being downstream of a bursting dam” (192) - metaphor significance
- 13. Thomas falkner - horse abundance (185)
- 14. American folksong - betsy (193-4) - similar purpose to Source 1 “Wachtel”
- D. Purpose:** This chapter provides a lot of evidence and examples to demonstrate the amount of influence and importance animals had in European colonization, showing that animals were the main contributing factor to their success. The variety of animals described in the chapter show how more than one animal had a significant impact on humans as well as their abundance in nature and ability to adapt and thrive (in most cases).
- E. Evaluation:** This essay offers an in depth description of many pieces of evidence to build up to the author’s concluding claim. The evidence included in this source can be used to counter the claims made in the other two sources to the role of animals in European colonization. The author takes an interdisciplinary approach which may influence him to be less incinied to correct social wrongs like Source 1 and 3 and focus more one the geographical and animal significance. This chapter focuses a lot on examples of different animals to support animals conquered the West, not humans. The general argument for this source goes against Source 3 which argues animals need to be directed to be effective.

III. Anderson, Virginia DeJohn. “A Prophecy Fulfilled.” *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

- A. Author:** Virginia DeJohn Anderson specializes in the history of Colonial and Revolutionary America and is an Early America (History) Professor at University of Colorado.
  - 1. Anderson’s specialty and employment indicates a thorough understanding of the topics she writes about - animals' impact/role in colonizing the Indians. Much like the author of Source 1, Anderson is re-examining and correcting the Eurocentric Native American perception by providing evidence in support of Matthew Restall’s opposition to Indian inferiority.
- B. Thesis and Claims:** Indians were able to use the Europeans technology to their advantage and did show resistance. Even though Native Americans were not ultimately successful - indigenous people do not win and lose their land - they are actively making all of these choices to resist European conquest.
  - 1. “The colonists’ growing populations and burgeoning herds placed great pressure on Native Americans and led to appropriations of Indian land” (1)
  - 2. “Indians frustrated by the colonists’ inability to control their animals sought revenge by killing livestock” (1)

3. “Tensions over livestock contributed to King Philip’s War in New England and Bacon’s Rebellion in Virginia” (1)

### C. Evidence

1. Livestock purposely used to advance land by releasing the animals on Native Americans land giving the choice to either, “fend the animals off as best they could or else to move on” (3) - Source 2 animals as contributing factor
  - a) Easy and cheap to use animals to frustrate Indians to move away (14)
  - b) “Livestock enabled the English to extend their dominion over the New World with remarkable speed and thoroughness” (29)
  - c) Animals as highly effective instruments of English dominion (14)
  - d) Antagonize Indians to abandon territory (14)
  - e) “Encroachment again began with invasions of livestock” (28)
2. Rapid European population growth and farming/animal husbandry needs lead to intensification of land appropriation (9) - even in land set aside specifically for Indians (10)
3. Metacom - people vulnerable to encroachment by colonists and livestock (21)
4. Indians at first preferred sharing waste land (7), built fences in response (15) but resort to violent means to defend themselves (3) because “the colonists' growing insistence on exclusive control inspired native peoples to follow suit” (7)
5. Geographical expansion - Indians scrambled to mount a defense (9)
  - a) Source 1 - geographical expansion capable because of animals
6. Indians acted in self defense and responded with violence by targeting livestock in hopes of adding pressure to colonists need for cooperation and restoration of balance (15) - connection to Source 1 myth of Native American desolation
7. Narragansett leaders threat and Thomas Minor testimony (16) show Native American resistance
  - a) “Indians left behind the unbutchered carcasses of the beasts...” (18)
8. Nanticoke Indians and Metacom attacks (29)
9. Mutilates versus killing of the most “English” of livestock species (24-5)
10. Colonists aggression (28)
11. Human tortures → animals as enemies for contribution to English expansion (25)
12. Lack of unity/leadership lead to individuals on both sides “engaging in defiant acts of sabotage that only made the situation more intolerable for everyone” (14)
  - a) Connection to Source 1 - lack of unity within Indians leading to their demise
13. Colonists do not see/choose not to see symbolic intent of Indians (16)
  - a) “interpreting unusually violent depredations against livestock... as belligerent acts... as unprovoked assaults... failed to look for connections between the Indians' behavior and [colonists] own conduct... saw attacks as isolated events” (18)
  - b) “colonists' willful disregard for Indian complaints... deliberate strategy for land acquisition” (14)
14. Colonists lack defending Indian rights or making efforts to amend problems. Ex:
  - a) Edward Hammond (2)
  - b) Judged local Indians less useful for the services and essentially useless for trade and insignificant as allies (12-13)
  - c) Colonial court indifference - no justice (15-16)
  - d) Townspeople of Rehoboth (13)

- e) New Englanders deny animal trespass importance and explain the war as a divine chastisement inflicted on them for their impiety (27)
  - 15. Indians not adapting animals how colonists originally intended (3-4)
    - a) Native ownership of livestock stimulated competition for land as well as trade (7) were unwelcome competitors (13)
    - b) Indians' effort to preserve their culture versus the colonists' desire to replace it - native traders beat colonists at their own game only made matters worse (9) resisting culture transformations (13)
  - 16. Indians as thieves and accusing of trafficking goods ex: 1651 English farmers from Hempstead on Long Island (6) 1650s Earmarks (8)
  - 17. New England → local officials handle law enforcement (13) leading to imbalance of Native American and colonists justice - decline in documentation can be a result of unequal treatment in colonial courts and not a true representation of the colonist to Indian aggressive/hostile acts ratio
  - 18. Plymouth sentenced three Wampanoag men to death for murdering John Sassamon (20)
    - a) Doeg Indians and Thomas Mathew - avenge the Englishman's death (20)
  - 19. 1675–76 livestock disputes → mistrust and anxiety → act of sabotage → the outbreak of war in New England and Virginia” (21)
  - 20. Animals help to incite war - Daniel Gookin (21)
    - a) Sachem - animal trespass justification of war expected (22)
  - 21. Attack in June 1675 - colonists' decision to flee to garrisons for safety and request military support transform a plundering raid into the opening act of a bloody war (22)
  - 22. Pan-Indian alliance (23)
  - 23. Christian Indians - warring Indians and angry colonists who questioned the converts' allegiance to the English cause (23)
    - a) Joseph Tuckapawillin, Hassanamesit's Indian minister (24)
  - 24. Nathaniel Bacon - Virginia rebel (26)
    - a) Bacon implied that recurrent Indian depredations against livestock and other property justified *English* aggression (26)
  - 25. Frances Moryson - “Fault lay with colonists who could not curb their lust for Indian land” (27)
- D. Purpose:** This source includes an in depth analysis of the role of animals in European colonization as well as Native American resistance. The author shows that animals had just as an important role in the development of American colonies as humans did. The author shows that although the Native Americans were conquered in the end, they were not conquered passively. The author utilizes a lot of paraphrasing of primary accounts of observations to expand her argument as well as primary sources to add specific detail to contribute to the extent of the situation. The author shows that while animals were helpful in gaining land, livestock also had negative effects by leading to tensions between the colonists and Native Americans.
- E. Evaluation:** This source mentions information found in the other two sources but emphasizes most on resistance exhibited by Native Americans as well as the tensions that arose between the two groups of people over livestock. The author provides a detailed account of the cultural aspects of colonization and focuses more on the cultural history as opposed to environmental history as presented in Source 2. This source can be by extension in support of Source 2 in the significance of animals in displacing Indians from their lands but places more emphasis on human agency and importance in navigating

these animals to do what they want. This source may also be an extension of Source 1 through its depiction of Native Americans as resilient and adaptive.

The evidence in the three sources, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* by Matthew Restall, "A Prophecy Fulfilled" by Virginia DeJohn Anderson, and *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe* by Alfred Crosby, challenge a Eurocentric perspective of colonization. Anderson and Restall both approach the topic from the perspective of a historian and offer evidence in opposition to Indian simplicity. In contrast, Crosby, a historian and geographer, writes from an interdisciplinary perspective offering evidence of geographical significance suggesting animals as the main asset and contributing factor to European colonization.

In his work, Restall traces the origins of two myths, the myth of Indian desolation and the myth of European superiority, demonstrates each one's flaws, and counters them with evidence justifying his arguments. While Crosby and Restall both acknowledge it was not European superiority that led to European success in conquest, they both offer differing views on the contributing factors. Restall offers alternative explanations such as weaponry, native disunity, and disease as to why the Europeans were successful, while Crosby is clear in his claim that animals were the main factor. The two contradict each other in that Restall says, "Nevertheless, it seems clear that guns, horses, and mastiffs were a minor factor" (Restall 142), while Crosby states, "If the Europeans had arrived in the New World and Australasia with twentieth-century technology in hand, but no animals, they would not have made as great a change as they did by arriving with horses, cattle, pigs, goats, sheep, asses, chickens, cats, and so forth" (Crosby 173).

However, the debate among Anderson and Restall is closer to each other in how they emphasize certain factors and argue against indigenous people's primitiveness. Overall, while not directly written in response to Restall's work, Anderson's work provides numerous examples of Indian resistance and can be used to support the general argument Restall and Professor O'Toole make that Indians were adaptive and not passive. Anderson and Restall would be able to engage in a scholarly conversation regarding the disadvantages of a Eurocentric perspective in the historiographic representation of these events with

Restall taking apart the myth, which introduces a new perspective on European colonization that Anderson expands on and uses to demonstrate indigenous people as unpassive, adaptive people, who, "often beat the colonists at their own game" (Anderson 9).

To some extent, historians may use Anderson's work to support Crosby's claim of animals as the main factor in European success. Anderson offers a series of examples where animals proved to be an extremely valuable tool in clearing indigenous people from lands, supporting Crosby's claim of animal significance. Anderson states that "By the 1680s the creatures functioned as highly effective instruments of English dominion... means by which colonists established exclusive control over more and more territory" (Anderson 2-3) and, "Wherever colonists went with their free-ranging animals, they used the creatures to occupy land" (Anderson 29). The difference between the two pieces of literature, however, is that Anderson argues that the animals need to be directed to be effective, and their conquest was contingent upon the "colonists' growing populations and burgeoning herds [placing] great pressure on Native Americans [leading] to appropriations of Indian land" (Anderson 1) rather than inevitable by the geographical timing and presence of animals, which is how Crosby depicts it.

In each of these texts, Restall, Crosby, and Anderson share a common use of rhetoric by using primary sources to add detail to their descriptions. Anderson and Restall take a critical approach to re-examine and correct Eurocentrism flaws by using primary sources as examples and evidence, while Crosby spends most of his chapter with a lot of evidence and description and makes his claims at the end. Restall and Crosby both use a form of referencing by incorporating recent examples of European colonization misconceptions prevalent today. To demonstrate the flaws in conquest history, Restall uses evidence to actively justify his arguments and build his credibility with the reader to prepare them for the myths he will be analyzing later. Crosby takes a similar approach to Restall by gesturing to the story of 19th century US History people get today - US white settlers conquering the West - but uses his evidence and descriptions to show that, contrary to the Eurocentric interpretation, it was the animals which were pushing all of the events. As opposed to having a clear claim like Crosby and Restall, Anderson takes a different approach to her argument and uses her claims to show how overall Europeans are successful in



New England-Northeast part of North America - they take over - but it is not immediate, it is not easy and it is not uncontested by the Native Americans.

Each of the scholars advances their arguments in the debate in a different way. While these three sources are written by scholars who are well educated in their fields, there are shortcomings within each work that connects them in a way that would allow them to engage in a conversation. Crosby emphasizes Europeans "benefited from the great majority of these changes, but benefit or not, their role often was less a matter of judgment and choice than of being downstream of a bursting dam" (192). In this phrase, it is clear a bursting dam is not being used in a literal sense; instead, it depicts a spectacular image that Crosby uses as a historical explanation of the events. The use of this metaphor may be interpreted as a shortcoming to his argument because it may lead to readers questioning why Crosby would provide all of this material evidence to build up towards a conclusion, and instead of making careful connections and a more moderate claim, he includes a metaphor in his closing remarks of the chapter. Furthermore, the question of whether the metaphor is supported by the evidence provided and if the evidence supporting this claim is as spectacular as the metaphor that accompanies it, is answered in Restall and Anderson's works, which show the emphasis Crosby puts on animals as opposed to human agency in European conquest success may not be entirely accurate. While he provides evidence of the impact of animal expansion and adaptation, Crosby's claim of animal power and influence is contradicted in Restall's work where he builds an argument demonstrating a "trilogy of factors—disease, native disunity, and Spanish steel—goes most of the way toward explaining the Conquest's outcome. Remove just one and the likelihood of the failure of expeditions... would have been very high" (Restall 143). Likewise, Anderson provides evidence showing how on numerous occasions, Europeans directed livestock "to advance land by releasing the animals on Native Americans land giving the choice to either, "fend the animals off as best they could or else to move on" (Anderson 3).

In the same way, Crosby's shortcomings are answered in the other two sources, flaws and holes in Restall and Anderson's arguments are filled by one another's and Crosby's work. Restall attempts to

correct certain kinds of distortion in the traditional representation of European contact with the Americas, but perhaps he is guilty of shortcomings in his analysis.

Overall, Restall, Crosby, and Anderson make significant contributions to the debate of European colonization with convincing arguments offering great insight. The shortcomings found in Restall's argument are filled with Crosby's insight on animals, and Crosby's lack of emphasis on human agency is filled with Anderson's evidence of Native American employment of animals and adaptations. These flaws and shortcomings allow the texts to come together and "talk" to each other in the sense that one source provides certain insights and important contributions while the other is there to fill certain blind spots or shortcomings of the evidence or the argument.